

PROPOSED
MINUTES OF THE
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD MEETING

January 15, 2010, 10:00 A.M.
LAKE ERIE ROOM, MICHIGAN HISTORICAL CENTER
702 WEST KALAMAZOO STREET, LANSING, MICHIGAN

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Beld, Janese Chapman, Richard Harms, Elisabeth Knibbe, Ted Ligibel,
Carolyn Loeb, Jennifer Radcliff, Ron Staley

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Lynn Evans

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Amy Arnold, Laura Ashlee, Bob Christensen, Brian Conway, Scott Grammer, Ted
Grevstad-Nordbrock, Bryan Lijewski, Martha MacFarlane-Faes, Denise Sachau,
Dan Schneider, Susan Sheppard, Diane Tuinstra, Todd Walsh

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Phil Belfy, concerning Phil Belfy v. East Lansing Historic District Commission
Lisa Black

Dr. Thomas W. Brunk, concerning Charles Lang Freer House

William Colburn, concerning Charles Lang Freer House

Kevin Cornish, concerning Clinton Downtown Historic District

Charles N. DeGryse, concerning David Kircher v. Ypsilanti Historic District
Commission

Kirsten Freiburger

Casie Jensen

Susie McBride

James Miller

Nathan Nietering

Carol Nelson, concerning Rosedale Gardens Historic District

Michael Nelson, concerning Rosedale Gardens Historic District

Bill Rutter, concerning Clinton Downtown Historic District

Sharon Scott, concerning Clinton Downtown Historic District

John Stimac, concerning Rosedale Garden Historic District

Jenna Walker, concerning Rosedale Gardens Historic District

Harry Wilbur

Joni Wilbur

Xian Zhang

Harms called the meeting to order at 10:04 a. m.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Chapman moved Evans be elected Vice-Chair of the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

Beld supported Chapman's motion.

Vote: 8-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Loeb moved approval of agenda

Staley supported Loeb's motion

Vote: 8-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Knibbe moved approval of minutes with the correction of Evans providing support for Hoagland's motion to accept the Proposal for Decision as written in the matter of Phil Belfy v. East Lansing Historic District Commission.

Loeb supported Knibbe's motion

Vote: 8-0

APPROVAL OF 2010 GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION NOMINEES

Radcliff moved to accept all of the 2010 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation nominees, and that the list be forwarded to the Governor's office for her approval and signature.

Staley supported Radcliff's motion

Vote: 7-0, Knibbe abstained

STAFF REPORTS

Brian Conway, State Historic Preservation Office

- Offered welcome to new Board member, Dr. Ted Ligibel, and offered congratulations to Janese Chapman on being reappointed to the Review Board.
- Acknowledged students from Eastern Michigan University's historic preservation program.
- Nick Bozen is away from work on medical leave, and should return in May. Announced that Grammer was working with SHPO in Nick's absence.
 - Grammer has a background in archaeology, historic preservation, and law.
- More than 150 applications were received for the two student positions
- In the process of hiring two Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) employees
 - Funds for new staff members are from Department of Human Services

- Michigan is set to receive approximately \$250 million as part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.
- Since October 1, 2009, the SHPO is part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), which is part of the Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth (DELEG), and that money is coming directly to the department.

Radcliff mentioned that she received a call regarding weatherization projects in historic districts, and that she referred the caller to the SHPO. Radcliff asked if that was the best action to take in that matter. Conway replied that is likely the best course of action. Radcliff then asked who, within SHPO, should she refer people to. MacFarlane-Faes replied that she would be the best contact until the WAP employees were hired.

- There were changes to the historic preservation tax laws in December 2009.
 - There was an attempt to redirect funds designated for Tiger Stadium to other projects
 - The current law allows for the selection of special projects outside the annual cap. Those projects include the Argonaut Building and Broderick Tower in Detroit, the Durant Hotel in Flint, and the Federal Building in Grand Rapids
 - There was a provision to provide consideration for the Fort Shelby Hotel in Detroit
- Arnold is concluding the West Michigan Pike project
- Arnold will soon be spending more time on the Michigan Modern project.
- The transition to MSHDA has been very smooth and successful.
- An agreement has been signed with Eastern Michigan University that provides for students in the historic preservation program to write Michigan Historical Markers.

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS

Site: Rosedale Gardens Historic District, Livonia, Wayne County

Presented By: Christensen

Moved for Approval: Staley

Seconded: Chapman

Vote: 8-0

Criteria: A, C

Level of Significance: Local

Radcliff objected to the use of the term “minimal traditional,” and preferred the use of “Colonial” or “English Cottage.” Christensen added that there are no good criteria, but if you look at the literature from the time period, they often illustrate houses with Colonial and English Cottage characteristics mixed together. Radcliff noted that she expects to see “Revival” after such labels, since there wasn’t an

American Colonial style. She then asked what should be used going forward. Christensen replied that he prefers English Cottage for those modest houses without strong Revival characteristics, rather than Tudor or Colonial Revival. Ligibel added that this is the result of homes such as those in Rosedale Gardens being more vernacular in style, rather than being an actual style. Ligibel added that English Cottage may be used in publications as a generic vernacular term. Christensen clarified that he is trying to use recognizable terminology. Loeb stated that though the term is not good, the idea behind it provides a connection to traditional building types. Knibbe asked how the Board will distinguish between the many housing types of mid-twentieth century suburban neighborhoods without watering down the historic label. She added that it is the Board's job to keep the historic label meaningful. Christensen said that he is cognizant of that dilemma, and supports this nomination because it is the first such development in Livonia. Chapman added that the developers created several similar developments over a ten year period. She then asked if the Board should consider all of the other Rosedale developments in the Detroit metropolitan area as a thematic nomination. Knibbe stated that is important to know whether the development company was a pioneering company, or if the organization was one of several doing the same thing. Radcliff asked what the prospect of creating a local historic district is. Stimac replied that there is little political support for the creation of such a district. Ligibel asked why part of the development was not included within the boundary. Christensen replied that the original four plats are included in the boundary, and the first plat is a mix of post-war buildings and commercial developments. He then added that the east boundary had originally been platted as commercial, but was replatted in the 1940s, and the homes there are similar to ranch-style houses in the surrounding area. Stimac added that the homes not included in the boundary are outside the period of significance.

Site: Manistee Iron Works Machine Shop, Manistee, Manistee County

Presented By: Christensen

Moved for Approval: Knibbe

Seconded: Ligibel

Vote: 8-0

Criteria: A, C

Level of Significance: Local

Ligibel asked for clarification regarding the inclusion of a non-contributing building in the nomination. Christensen replied that, in some cases, the addition overwhelms the original building, but that is not the case in this situation. Ligibel then asked if the addition to this building would be eligible if the owner applied for tax credits. Christensen replied that it would not be eligible. Ligibel pointed out the word "inventory" in line four of paragraph one of page nine should read "inventor." Knibbe clarified that in the case of tax credits, the entire building is eligible, and the non-contributing addition would not be excluded. Ligibel asked if the building is eligible even if it's non-contributing. Knibbe responded that non-contributing

buildings can be excluded, but she did not think that was the case with additions. Radcliff asked for clarification of the building's layout from Christensen. Christensen replied that the addition is an attached wing of the original building. Conway stated that Knibbe is correct in her interpretation.

Site: Charles Lang Freer House, Detroit, Wayne County

Presented By: Brunk

Moved for Approval: Radcliff

Seconded: Chapman

Vote: 7-0, Knibbe abstained

Criteria: A, B, C

Level of Significance: National

Ligibel asked for clarification that the house was located in the East Ferry Street Historic District, and the designation level of the house. Ligibel then suggested that the fifth paragraph of the narrative description be moved to the beginning of the narrative to allow for better understanding of the history of the house by those unfamiliar with the house. Brunk stated that the narrative, as written, does not state that the property is already listed on National Register, and that will be changed in the final nomination. Harms noted that page four of the nomination refers to a financial crash of 1899, but there was not a crash in that year. Harms then added that there was a crash in 1893, but the nation's economy had recovered by 1899. Brunk replied that in 1899 13 freight car manufacturers merged to create the American Car & Foundry Company. Ligibel asked if there was a map showing the house in the context of the historic district. Conway replied that a USGS map needs to be submitted with the nomination. Christensen replied that a site plan will be included in the nomination. Chapman noted that the Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board approved and accepted the additional information.

Site: Clinton Downtown Historic District, Clinton, Lenawee County

Presented By: Rutter

Moved for Approval: Ligibel

Seconded: Staley

Vote: 8-0

Criteria: A, B, C

Level of Significance: Local

Ligibel asked why the newspaper building was not included in the nomination. Rutter replied that the owner of the building was also the vice-president of the city council, and the city council would not have supported the nomination if the building was included in the nomination. Cornish added that it was his opinion that it was better to proceed with the nomination, than to wait and potentially lose the district because of one parcel. Knibbe asked whether this was not a case of "reverse cherry picking" whereby particular buildings are excluded from a district based on political considerations. She also asked if the boundary justification is legitimate. Christensen stated that he had the same concerns and discussed the situation with

staff from the National Register of Historic Places. The Register left the decision up to the SHPO, and Christensen agreed with Cornish that it was better to have a completed district with one exception rather than no district. Knibbe then asked why the city's approval was needed to list the district in the National Register. Christensen replied that owner approval was needed to list the property. Conway stated that it takes more than fifty percent of the property owners within a district to object to the district before the district can be precluded from listing. He also added that the building in question does not face Michigan Avenue, and thus visually not a part of the district. Ligibel added that a district line must be drawn somewhere, and suggested that the Board approve the district. Christensen noted a letter of support from a district property owner. Radcliff asked if there was support for listing the district at state-level significance because of its location on the Sauk Trail. Christensen replied that he did not think a case could be made for state-level significance.

Site: Gowan Block, Sault Sainte Marie, Chippewa County

Presented By: Christensen

Moved for Approval: Knibbe

Seconded: Radcliff

Vote: 8-0

Criteria: A, C

Level of Significance: Local

Radcliff noted that she is not a fan of listing single buildings that should be a part of a district. Ligibel suggested removing the sentence referring to the uncertainty of DeMar's involvement in the design of the building.

Site: Adams Building, Sault Sainte Marie, Chippewa County

Presented By: Christensen

Moved for Approval: Knibbe

Seconded: Staley

Vote: 8-0

Criteria: A, C

Level of Significance: Local

Knibbe noted that the narrative description summary is unclear about the first floor alterations, and if those changes are considered significant. She then stated that it is her opinion that the changes are not significant to the history of the building, thereby allowing for the use of tax credits should a future owner restore the building to its original state. Christensen stated that he disagrees with that assessment, and that the alterations were a major change to the building. Knibbe then asked when an alteration should be kept and when it should not. She then pointed to the Mansard roof which was added ten years after the changes to the first floor, yet deemed inappropriate. Conway said that it amounts to what was considered good design for the time period, in this case the 1960s. Conway then added that there was a good deal of discussion among SHPO staff, and that the

decision was that restoring certain elements of building would create a false sense of history because those features never existed with the 1960s façade. Conway finally noted that the building should be fully restored or not restored, and not a mix of the historic and the 1960s. Knibbe again stated her desire to write the nomination so as not to burden the building with the existing first floor for the life of the building. Conway expressed support for Knibbe's view. Ligibel stated that the Board has to assume that there are better examples of Modern design. Knibbe added that the nomination, as written, suggests that the 1960s changes to the first floor are more important than the original design. Radcliff expressed support for Knibbe's view. Harms suggested writing the nomination to note that the 1960s alterations are non-contributing features of the building.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE STUDY REPORTS:

Presented by Amy Arnold

Zion Congregational Church of God Historic District, Detroit

The Board made no additional comment.

Woodward/Palmer/Cass/Kirby Historic District, Detroit

The Board made no additional comment.

882 Oakman Boulevard Historic District, Detroit

The Board made no additional comment.

Chesterfield Hills Historic District, East Lansing

The Board made no additional comment.

William S. Adams House (2040 S. Livernois) Historic District, Rochester Hills

The Board made no additional comment.

Stiles School (3976 S. Livernois) Historic District, Rochester Hills

The Board made no additional comment.

Elimination of 1585 S. Rochester Road Historic District, Rochester Hills

Radcliff asked why this district was being eliminated. Arnold suggested that a local property rights movement has voiced concern about the impact of local historic district designation on property values. Arnold also noted that survey reports from the 1970s were often a simple one page report, and lacked specifics as to why the property possessed historic value. Knibbe stated that because of the lack of information, historic resources had to be evaluated as they are now. Ligibel stated that there is confusion regarding the meaning of historic preservation.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPEALS

Presented by Scott Grammer

Grammer requested a resolution from the Board authorizing the Chair of the Board to sign documents on behalf of the board.

Knibbe moved that Chair of the Board be granted the authority to sign documents pertaining to Board business for the full Board.

Staley supported Knibbe's motion.

Vote: 8-0

Grammer requested a resolution from the Board authorizing SHPO legal counsel to sign dismissal orders on behalf of the Board.

Radcliff moved that SHPO legal counsel be granted the authority to sign orders of dismissal on behalf of the board.

Knibbe supported Radcliff's motion.

Vote: 8-0

Phil Belfy v. East Lansing Historic District Commission

Knibbe moved that the Board approve the Proposal for Decision.

Loeb supported Knibbe's motion.

Vote: 8-0

David Kircher v. Ypsilanti Historic District Commission

Staley moved that the Board approve the Proposal for Decision.

Ligibel supported Staley's motion.

Vote: 8-0

Harry Wilbur v. Grand Rapids Historic District Commission

Radcliff moved that the Board approve the Proposal for Decision.

Ligibel supported Radcliff's motion.

Vote: 8-0

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

May 10, 2010; September 24, 2010, January 21, 2011

ADJOURNMENT

Radcliff moved adjournment

Knibbe supported Radcliff's motion

Vote: 8-0, adjournment at 12:12 p. m.

Prepared by T. Walsh